

REMARKS

Claims 28-45 and 47 remain pending in the application. Claim 46 was previously canceled, without prejudice, in view of applicants' election to prosecute claims directed to lightguides in application serial no. 09/613,313.

Claims 28-45 and 47 stand rejected. Claim 28-45 and 47 have been provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as claiming the same invention as certain claims of co-pending and commonly owned application no. 09/613,313. Applicants traverse this rejection. The present application claims optical films, whereas the '313 application claims lightguides. These are not the same invention.

Claims 28-31, 37-40 and 47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wortman et al (US 5,771,328) in view of Lippman et al. (US 5,695,269). Applicants traverse this rejection. Wortman et al has been addressed in previous responses by applicants, and applicants renew those comments as if fully set forth herein.

In making the foregoing rejection, the examiner asserts that Wortman teaches "each of the plurality of prism grooves (36 of figure 3) being formed to include a plurality optical structures (figures 1-3), the plurality of optical structures for providing optical power [is considered to be defined peak (42 of figure 3), the bottom edges of side surfaces (38, 38' of figure 3), a line (figure 1), and a groove 44 of figure 3) of each having a characteristic selected one of the group of amplitude, a period and an aspect ratio (figures 3-5 and col. 4 lines 10-39 and col. 4 line 62 to col. 5 lines 22 and see groove axis from the input edge surface (figures 3-6)." Applicants do not dispute this characterization. However, what the examiner overlooks is that as claimed in the present application, the characteristic is defined to vary along the length of the groove axis. Taking the examiner's example that the peak 42 taught by Wortman et al is an optical structure adding optical power, the peak would have to

vary along the groove axis. This may be envisioned if the examiner considers a bug crawling along the peak 42. The peak may be made to have a varying height characteristics, and the bug would experience the peak rising and falling as if climbing and descending rolling hills on its journey along the peak from the first edge to the second edge. If it is the side surfaces that define the optical structure, the side surfaces may spread and flatten or narrow and steepen along the axis. The traveling bug would experience on its journey along the peak plane-like regions that transition to cliff-like regions. This variation of the prism structures is not taught or suggested by Wortman et al.

The examiner offer's Lippman et al to fill the gaps. However, Lippman et al arguably only teaches prism grooves having a v-shaped structure and arrangement of the grooves substantially perpendicular to a light source. But Lippman et al does not teach the characteristic of the optical structure varying along the length of the groove. Combining Wortman et al and Lippman et al. leaves the bug making an uneventful trek along a peak of a groove of unchanging character.

Next the examiner rejects claims 32-36 and 41-45 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as bring unpatentable over Wortman et al in view of Lippman et al and further in view of Suzuki. Suzuki has been addressed by the applicants previously and comments regarding Suzuki are renewed as if fully set forth herein. Does Suzuki make the bug's journey more interesting? No. The prism grooves taught in Suzuki likewise do not have a characteristic that varies along the groove axis. Therefore, the combination of Wortman et al, Lippman et al and Suzuki again leaves the bug traveling along the peak of a groove of unchanging character.

Because the art fails to disclose, teach or suggest forming the prism grooves to have a characteristic that varies along the length of the prism axis, applicants submit the pending claims are allowable and such action is solicited.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

The commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency in the amount enclosed or any additional fees which may be required to Deposit Account No. 13-2855.

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Respectfully submitted,

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